

# **ENGAGE. EDUCATE. EMPOWER.**

March 3, 2020

Dear North Newton Parent and/or Guardian,

As you are most likely aware, several states across the country are starting to see the first cases of the Novel Coronavirus COVID-19 affect communities. Like other communities, Newton County has already begun dialogue around the potential affects the virus will have on schools and daily operations. While there has been much media attention concerning the virus and its adverse effects, we am writing to inform you as to how North Newton Schools is preparing to deal with a potential outbreak of influenza or a stronger strain such as COVID-19.

North Newton Schools has been closely following recent media repo reports and information from The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), our local Newton County Health Nurse, and the Indiana Department of Health about Coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19). Global efforts are currently underway to contain the spread of the virus and mitigate its impact and the Federal Government and several Indiana governmental agencies are working closely with both national and regional public health partners to respond to this threat.

Outbreaks like this are oftentimes troublesome and concerning, however North Newton Schools is prepared to assist and address this concern. Some parents and students might be worried about this virus and how it may impact our schools and communities. Be assured that we are aware of these concerns and are proactively working to insure our schools are safe for all students and staff. The safety of our students and employees is paramount.

How can parents help?

Our school nurse, health aides, principals and staff will be working with students to promote good hygiene and to keep everyone healthy and safe. We also work with our custodians to ensure our schools receive thorough cleaning every day. Parents are asked for help in reinforcing healthy practices at home with children. This would include the following:

- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, especially after going to the bathroom before eating, and after blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing.
- Avoid close contact with people who are sick
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth
- Stay home when you are sick
- Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throw the tissue in the trash
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces using a regular household cleaning spray or wipe



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Superintendent  
Dr. Cathy Rowe

In the event that widespread illness affects students and/or staff, it may be necessary to close school for disinfecting purposes for an extended amount of time. Parents and guardians are encouraged to plan for extended ELearning in the event that school is unable to be held. There is also a possibility that larger gatherings such as athletic events or other school sponsored trips and events may be rescheduled or cancelled.

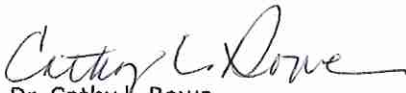
The North Newton custodial and maintenance staff is to be commended for their hard work in ensuring that all of our buildings are cleaned on a regular basis with the utmost care. They have been cleaning all surfaces that students touch. We already use disinfectants that kill viruses such as the Coronavirus, Influenza A, Influenza B, etc. and already practice regular cleanings for areas that students are touching. Principals, teachers, health aides and other staff have been reinforcing good hand washing techniques with students and will continue to do so throughout the next few months ahead.

If your child is sick and must stay home, it is imperative that you notify your child's school office. Additionally, if your child must be sent home, we must have a current and up to date phone contact for you or an emergency contact phone number. Please help us in contacting you by ensuring you have given the school up to date contact phone numbers.

We are hopeful that North Newton students and staff will stay healthy through any potential outbreak! But we must plan for widespread illness in order to be proactive and to communicate how school will carry on in the event that illness overtakes students and/or staff. We realize that an impact to our schools' abilities to carry on as usual create family obstacles and understand that it is difficult to plan around school delays and ELearning, however our first priority is to the safety and health of our students and staff and hope you understand our commitment to these individuals.

Thank you for helping at home to keep your child healthy--working together, in tandem, we will all emerge unscathed by illness!

Sincerely,



Dr. Cathy L. Rowe



Leisa Laffoon, North Newton School Corporation Nurse